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BOARD OF EDUCATION.

97

REPORT

ON THE

ROYAL COLLEGE OF ART,

LONDON,

FOR THE YEAR 1908—1909.

Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of His Majesty.



LONDON:
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By EYRE AND SPOTTISWOODE, LTD.,
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E. PONSONBY, 116, GRAFTON STREET, DUBLIN.

1910.

[Cd. 5003.] Price 1d.



BOARD OF EDUCATION

REPORT

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THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF ART.

REPORT FOR THE YEAR 1908-9.

NUMBER AND TYPES OF STUDENTS.

1. The total number of students under instruction during the whole or some part of the year under review was 215, as compared with 199 during the previous year. Of these, 185 (141 men and 44 women) were taking full-time courses with a view to Associateship of the College; and 30 (15 men and 15 women) were external students specially admitted to Craft Classes organised in connection with the work of the College. The number of full-time students under instruction at the close of the academic year was 163.

2. The College is mainly attended by assisted students, who are admitted without fees, and who also in some cases receive maintenance allowances from national or local funds. These assisted students are of three types. Some of them are teachers of Art or intending teachers of Art, who are admitted as Students-in-Training, with a view to receiving training in the teaching of Art subjects and to passing through a course of instruction, which terminates in a Full Associateship of the College, and covers work done in all its four Schools, known as the "School of Architecture," the "School of Ornament and Design," the "School of Decorative Painting," and the "School of Sculpture and Modelling." Others, including the "National Scholars," are persons who have been in actual employment in some trade which depends on decorative art and have at the same time been registered students in an approved School of Art in the United Kingdom. These are admitted with a view to improving their qualifications as Art workers for architecture, manufactures, and decoration, by means of a course terminating in a Schools' Associateship, and covering the work of one of the four Schools. Others, again, including the "Royal Exhibitioners" and "Local Exhibitioners," are

admitted with an option to proceed either to the Full Associateship or to the Schools' Associateship. Students-in-Training are selected after a consideration of works submitted by them in order to show their proficiency in the more advanced branches of Art. Other assisted students are, as a rule, selected by means of competitions based upon the annual examinations in Art held by the Board. Assistance in the form of "Royal College of Art Scholarships" or "Junior Art Scholarships" is also awarded to students of the College as a result of proficiency shown during their course. Fee-paying students are also admitted to the College so far as the available accommodation permits. The 185 full-time students in 1908-9 included:—

- 14 Students-in-Training.
- 12 National Scholars.
- 20 Royal Exhibitioners.
- 21 Local Exhibitioners.
- 32 Royal College of Art Scholars.
- 4 Junior Art Scholars.
- 39 Free Students.
- 43 Fee-paying Students.

185

The fees paid during the year by the fee-paying full-time students and the external students amounted to £872 9s., as compared with £676 16s. in 1907-8.

3. During 1908-9, 26 students received appointments as teachers, designers, or craftsmen. Of these, four were Students-in-Training, three National Scholars, five Free Students, eight Royal Exhibitioners, four Local Exhibitioners, and two fee-paying students. The profession of teaching was taken up by 19 out of the 26. Of the remaining seven, one became a lithographic designer, one a designer to a firm of tile makers, and one a designer to a firm of metal workers; one went into a firm of makers of stained glass; one became an etcher and engraver to a firm of publishers; one obtained a post as searcher of designs in the Patent Office, and one a post as draughtsman in the Office of Works.

PREVIOUS HISTORY OF STUDENTS.

4. A classification of the students according to the localities from which they come shows that about half are drawn from the metropolis and the urban areas of three geographical counties, Yorkshire, Lancashire, and Staffordshire; 27 coming from London, 32 from Yorkshire, 19 from Lancashire, and 15

from Staffordshire. Kent contributes eight; Gloucestershire six; Cheshire and Hampshire four each; Sussex, Somerset, Warwickshire, and Cumberland three each; eight counties (Norfolk, Devon, Derbyshire, Notts., Essex, Bucks, Surrey, and Shropshire) yield two apiece, and five counties (Durham, Worcestershire, Leicestershire, Suffolk, and Dorset) one apiece. Six come from Wales and Monmouthshire, seven from Scotland, seven from Ireland, and seventeen from outside the United Kingdom. The external students admitted to Craft Classes are not included in this classification.

5.—(a) Before entering the College, the dominant consideration in the case of candidates for Studentships in Training has been the obtaining the Art Teachers' Certificates of the Board of Education. A certain number, however, have kept up the steady practice of some particular branch of productive Art work in which they have experience and special power. Others have continued to practise draughtsmanship and painting from the life. So far as the work required for the Art Teachers' Certificates of the Board ensures it, students of this type have a fair knowledge of painting, drawing, designing, and architecture, while some are also well up in modelling. It is, of course, impossible for the average Art teacher or intending Art teacher to become a successful executant in each of these branches of work, but he frequently does so in one branch, and acquires sufficient knowledge of the others to form a basis for that wider knowledge which he must obtain at the College if he is to be able to work satisfactorily in such stages of the curriculum as may concern him while he is an assistant teacher of a School of Art, and to devise a well-balanced curriculum for the School and maintain an efficient control when he becomes the head teacher.

(b) Before entering the College, most National Scholars have systematically studied (i) the principles of design; (ii) the practice of design as applied to their own particular branch of Art work, whether it be handicraft or design for manufactures; (iii) drawing, painting, or modelling from nature, of plants, animals, or the human figure; (iv) the history of ornamental Art, and in some cases (v) architecture. As a rule, work in the practice of design has formed the dominant feature of their study and about half of their time has been devoted to it. The branch of drawing, painting, or modelling followed depends chiefly upon the occupation of the students, *e.g.*, designers for wallpapers and woven patterns will pay more attention to the study of plants than the study of animals or the human figure, whilst architectural modellers, decorative painters, or enamellers will assiduously study the human figure. In most cases a practical knowledge of the technical conditions of manufactory or workshop production is also possessed by candidates for National Scholarships.

(c) Royal Exhibitioners will have followed courses of study which can be grouped under the same general heads as those given above for National Scholars. The dominant note of their studies will, however, in many instances have been different from that of intending National Scholars, less time having been given to the practice of design and more to the higher branches of imitative work in modelling, painting, or drawing from the human figure. Most Royal Exhibitioners come to the College with little knowledge of technical processes of commercial production. Many of them propose to become painters, sculptors, or book illustrators, while others have in mind the acquisition of power as craft workers in metal, wood, or fabric, and others, again, have teaching in view. The course of study pursued by Local Exhibitioners previous to admission to the College has generally been similar to that of Royal Exhibitioners but rather less comprehensive.

6. While students on entering the College are usually well prepared, so far as the particular Art subjects taken up by them are concerned, it is clear that their general education has in too many cases not been carried sufficiently far. In this connection it must be remembered that there is no provision at present in most Schools of Art in the United Kingdom for pupils to continue their general education along with their Art studies. The results of this failure to make artistic education and general education advance *pari passu* are seen most clearly in the students who enter the College with the intention of becoming Teachers. Many of these, after leaving an Elementary School, have had to earn their living while attending a School of Art in the evening, and some of the cleverest of them are, on account of their one-sided training, the most uncultured. The College staff make it their business to see that as far as possible no promising student shall be handicapped in his career for want of this general education, and a great deal of time is devoted to coaching such persons. It is obvious, however, that the College is not the proper place for general elementary work of this kind, and it will require consideration whether some evidence of having reached a proper standard of general education ought not to be exacted from candidates for admission to the College. The full benefit of the College training cannot be reaped by students whose want of general education prevents them from understanding the historical relation of the events and objects which have determined the development and supplied the inspiration of artistic production.

COURSES OF INSTRUCTION.

7. The distinction between the two primary functions of the College, (a) to instruct and train Teachers of Art subjects, and (b) to instruct students who intend to specialise in

particular branches of Art for the purposes of architecture, decoration, and manufactures, determines the selection of courses of instruction for individual students. The students (other than Students in Training, National Scholars, and certain other Free Students, whose careers are determined for them by the conditions on which they are admitted to the College) are required to state whether they enter with the object of becoming teachers or of becoming specialists. The following table shows the numbers of students who were preparing during 1908-9 to become teachers and specialists respectively, together with the number of years during which they had been at the College. It is probable that many of those classed as specialists may at some time or other hereafter give instruction in their particular subject:—

| Year. | Totals. | | Preparing to be— | | | |
|---------|---------|--------|------------------|--------|--------------|--------|
| | | | Teachers. | | Specialists. | |
| | Men. | Women. | Men. | Women. | Men. | Women. |
| 6th - | 1 | — | 1 | — | — | — |
| 5th - | 16 | 3 | 10 | 2 | 6 | 1 |
| 4th - | 20 | 7 | 16 | 2 | 4 | 5 |
| 3rd - | 25 | 7 | 15 | 3 | 10 | 4 |
| 2nd - | 25 | 8 | 11 | 3 | 14 | 5 |
| 1st - | 54 | 19 | 22 | 7 | 32 | 12 |
| Total - | 141 | 44 | 75 | 17 | 66 | 27 |

8. The whole of the instruction given in the College is regarded as based on Architecture, and under the arrangements at present prevailing at the College all students who have not previously qualified in Architecture are required to take in their first term an introductory course in this subject, in which they study the general principles of architectural design and the relation of architecture to the other Arts. After this preliminary work, intending teachers move on to the next School selected for them by the Principal, and so pass in due course through all the four Schools of the College (Architecture, Design, Painting, and Modelling), while the intending specialists go without further delay into the School in which they propose to specialise. Each School is divided into an Upper and Lower Division, and students are placed in the one or the other according to their proficiency. A Literary Course and Evening Classes in Drawing from Life are common to students in all the Schools; and special professional training is given to intending teachers.

The distribution of the students among the four Schools at the end of 1908-9 was as follows :—

| School. | | Total Number of Students. | Number of intending Teachers. | Number of intending Specialists. |
|--------------|--------------------|------------------------------------|--|---|
| Architecture | { Upper Division - | 25 | 8 | 17 |
| | { Lower " - | 1 | — | 1 |
| Design - | { Upper Division - | 51 | 34 | 17 |
| | { Lower " - | 9 | 3 | 6 |
| Painting | { Upper Division - | 22 | 8 | 14 |
| | { Lower " - | 22 | 13 | 9 |
| Modelling | { Upper Division - | 26 | 7 | 19 |
| | { Lower " - | 7 | 4 | 3 |
| Total | | 163 | 77 | 86 |

Of the 30 external students who were specially admitted to Craft Classes, 19 (fourteen men and five women) were in the Etching and Engraving Class, six (one man and five women) were in the Pottery Class, two women were in the Lettering Class, and three women were in the Embroidery Class.

SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE.

PROFESSOR.—A. B. PITE, F.R.I.B.A. VISITOR.—J. BELCHER, R.A.

9.—(a) *Introductory Course*.—It is remarkable how few of the students have any knowledge of the elements of architectural history, or have taken any examination in Architecture. Even where they have received some previous training in this subject, it is confined, as a rule, to preparation for the Board's Architecture examinations which form part of the competition for Royal Exhibitions. Occasionally the subject of Architectural Design has been taken in the same competition. The students themselves are usually ready to disclaim any knowledge of or interest in Architecture. The only exceptions to this rule are furnished by persons specialising in Architecture; thus, in the session under review two students entered the College as National Scholars in Architecture. It is regrettable that teachers do not make more use of artistic buildings in their neighbourhood. Students, for example, come to the College from Yorkshire, with its splendid abbeys, or from cathedral cities, without having received any instruction in the peculiar beauties lying at the door of the School of Art in which they may have worked at Architecture as a qualifying subject for a Scholarship.

During the introductory course it is sought to awaken an intelligent interest in Architecture, and the course may roughly

be characterised as (i) practical; (ii) historical; and (iii) æsthetic.

(i) The students are required to prepare a working drawing of some object in the Victoria and Albert Museum. The usual methods of shaded drawing are laid aside, and definite usefulness and clearness are required, with only such elucidation by colour and shading as would assist a workman to understand the purpose in view. Practical acquaintance with masonry is obtained by the production to a large scale of working drawings for some subject of ecclesiastical design. During the recent year the problem in design was a simple domed church. It was found that most of the students had some knowledge of geometry and were able to grapple successfully with the geometrical problems involved. Indeed, it was gratifying to note the intelligent interest taken in this connection of plane and solid geometry with artistic effect and results.

(ii) The historical development of architecture in Greece and Rome and in mediæval and Renaissance times is, as a rule, dealt with in short lectures incidental to the subjects in hand, the object being to stimulate reading and knowledge of the relation of the other arts to Architecture, their historic mother. The more universal provision of lectures on Architectural History in Schools of Art is much to be desired.

(iii) The subjects set for design follow ancient examples as closely as is compatible with keeping in mind the conditions of building at the present day. It is found that elementary errors in taste seldom recur in students' designs after first correction, when the course of study includes a sufficiency of ancient examples which have been critically explained and analysed.

(b) *Advanced Course*.—This course is designed for three types of students: (i) architects and architectural draughtsmen, (ii) teachers qualifying as instructors in Architecture, and (iii) craftsmen engaged in the arts of building. The students occupy the whole year in the preparation of a design for a complete subject, such as a college chapel, in detail, working out the stonework and woodwork with carving and mouldings very fully. They are directed as to their sources of study and preparatory work, but are left to their own resources as regards original design, subject to regular criticism. The students who decided to take a second period in the Architectural School studied house architecture upon a fixed system of plan and style in order to afford a groundwork for the free consideration of the decoration of the interior in colour. Much

interest was shown in the treatment of the painted decorations, and the necessity for considering the architectural conditions was made clear.

10. Six students were candidates for the School Diploma and four were successful.

11. The specialist students of the Architectural School have repeatedly distinguished themselves in the students' competitions of the Royal Institute of British Architects. The Owen Jones Travelling Studentship of £100 for the colour decoration of architecture has been carried off three times within the last seven years. The Soane Medallion with £100 for design has been gained once, and the Silver Medal with 10 guineas for measured drawings of an ancient building has been gained twice within the same period, while the £50 scholarship for two years of the British Institution has been won on two of the three occasions on which it has been offered. It may be of interest to state how the eight students who gained these successes are at present employed :—

- 3 are instructors, specially qualified in Architecture, in institutions inspected by the Board.
- 1 is a decorative artist.
- 1 is a draughtsman in the Office of Works.
- 1 is architect to the Byzantine Research Fund.
- 1 is art master at Bangkok, Siam.
- 1 is still a student of the College.

SCHOOL OF ORNAMENT AND DESIGN.

PROFESSOR.—W. R. LETHABY. VISITOR.—W. CRANE, R.W.S.

12. The teaching is based on (i) the study of practical needs in production, which are more fully demonstrated in a series of Craft Classes attached to the School; (ii) the study of fine examples for which the immediate access possessed to the Victoria and Albert Museum gives every opportunity; and (iii) drawing from nature. The student is thus led on to experiment for himself, and extravagance and affectation tend to fall away. The exercises in design cover a wide range of subjects. Under the second head—work in the Museum—the pupils now more and more concentrate their studies upon objects that have some relation to the crafts they are directly interested in, and look at them from the points of view of construction and suitability for modern use. Nature study is a most necessary part of the training; it refines drawing and opens up a source of inspiration for new ideas. All the students attend the Evening Life Drawing Classes, which constitute an essential part of their training.

13. Out of twenty-one students who were candidates for the School Diploma of Associateship, eighteen were successful.

14. The Craft Classes are of great service in laying down the practical basis of many forms of design, and in teaching technique and necessary limitations by actual demonstration and experiment. By this direct access to the material conditions the purpose of design as *arranging for real work* is brought home to the students; the erroneous idea that design is an abstract thing is corrected, and the students are convinced that suitability and pleasant fitness are the main considerations. This influences not only their essays in designing, but their power of observation. The Craft Classes at present in operation are:—Etching and Engraving; Stone and Marble-carving; Stained Glass; Metalwork and Jewellery; Woodcarving and Gesso-work; Lettering and Illumination; Embroidery; and Pottery. The Stone and Marble-carving Class gives the students an opportunity of completing their work commenced in clay in the material in which it is intended to be carried out. The four figures executed by the students in the Modelling School for the decoration of the principal façade of the Victoria and Albert Museum would have been an impossibility before the establishment of this class. In the Etching and Engraving Class the experiment is tried of admitting a proportion of outside artists of distinction in their branches of Art. Their presence and work are a continual stimulus to the younger students, and have a considerable influence on their general character. In almost every case good work is being done in these classes, and the practical experience gained reacts on all that the students do throughout the School of Design.

SCHOOL OF DECORATIVE PAINTING.

PROFESSOR.—G. E. MOIRA. VISITOR.—E. A. ABBEY, R.A.

15. The aim of this School is not merely to produce technical dexterity, but also to afford a training for the imagination. In the Lower Division the quick studies from the antique, showing only structure and action, necessitate the use of the brain at the very outset. Afterwards, the more complete drawings of the head from life carry this method still further. All the drawings have to be made in line, to ensure the more exact study of form. After this comes the painting of the head from the antique in colour, to develop the study of planes and tone. Then comes figure composition, where the principles and essentials of design are insisted on. The student now enters the Upper Division, where most of the work is of a decorative character. Figure composition is gradually carried further; in the first instance, by designing a composition for a given subject and shape and making studies from life and drapery

for it; afterwards by making a cartoon in black and white from a similar figure design with studies as before. Towards the end of his course a student should be able to design and carry out such a composition full size in colour. Students thus equipped on leaving the College have great advantages. With the cultivation of the mind and the thorough knowledge of decorative composition which they should have obtained, they ought to be capable of undertaking the decoration of the walls of any building, stained glass work, book illustration, and poster designing—any work, in fact, that may come to hand. In addition, a special feature is made of training students to teach. The method adopted is to make the student analyse his own efforts. In the more elementary stages, the drawing or painting is placed by the side of the model, and the student is encouraged to criticise his own work. The same thing is done with the students' figure designs, and they are thus enabled to recognise more particularly the essentials of such work. Further, the students are required to select and pose their model. This, besides aiding their studies, gives them some insight into, and training in, the management of a school.

16. The standard of the students' attainments on admission to the School is considerably higher than formerly, and they are consequently able to do more advanced work at an earlier stage of their career. One-fourth of the students in the Upper Division were second year students who were doing work which had been laid down for the fourth and fifth years, and one-sixth were placed directly in the Upper Division without working in the Lower, and justified this advancement. Only one student was doing first year work; the rest of the first year students were doing second and third year work.

17. The subjects executed were—

A square panel:

Subject, Maternity; with stone surroundings.

A vertical panel:

Subject, Fortitude; old gold surroundings.

Subject, Moses; stone surroundings.

Panel for fireplace of a library:

Open subject; oak surroundings.

Panel for the entrance hall of a hospital:

Open subject; white surroundings.

The studies from drapery on the figure, and also from the life for the decorative compositions, were excellent.

18. The subjects given for the monthly compositions in connection with the lectures of the Literary Course produced very good work, demonstrating by the much higher standard

attained the great advantage of continued practice in this work. During the year under review the subjects were taken from Greek Mythology.

19. Out of twelve students who were candidates for the School Diploma, five were successful.

SCHOOL OF SCULPTURE AND MODELLING.

PROFESSOR.—E. LANTÉRI.

VISITOR.—T. BROCK, R.A.

20. As a rule, the Lower Division consists mainly of intending teachers who are taking the course for the Full Associateship of the College. The object aimed at is to give a general knowledge of the main principles of Sculpture and of the several branches of this Art. During their stay in the Modelling School the students apply as far as possible what they have learnt in the other three Schools. The course comprises (i) the study of the features of the face, (ii) the study of a bust from the antique, (iii) the study of a bust from the life, (iv) the study of a figure from the life, (v) two compositions in which Sculpture is applied either to architecture or to silversmiths' work, or to some other industrial Art. Before each of the studies a practical demonstration is made by the Professor.

21. Most of the students in the Upper Division intend to specialise in Sculpture. Consequently their studies are more practical and more advanced than those in the Lower Division. The various branches of Sculpture are taught in order to give the student all the necessary knowledge required to fit him on leaving the College to work as assistant to a sculptor, or as a decorator, or in any branch of industry where Sculpture is applied, such as architecture, silversmiths' work, pottery, or to engage in the special teaching of Modelling. Great stress is laid on the necessity for a close relation between the work of this School and that of the School of Architecture.

Eight of the more advanced students executed a commemorative monument to a man of science. The subject for the group was "Time and Science unveiling Truth." Each student, having composed the general scheme on a small scale, enlarged the work in sizes varying from 8 feet to 12 feet high. The figures composing each group were three-quarters life size. These studies were carried out very successfully. Being on a large scale, in which the practical side must be very precise, they are much more efficacious than studies on a small scale would be in increasing the students' power and knowledge. The less advanced students executed a frieze for a panel over a door, the subject being "Spring." As with the more advanced students, sketches were made giving the general scheme of Architecture and Sculpture together, and an enlargement was made of the frieze to 6 feet by 3 feet.

22. Two evenings a week, from 5 o'clock to 7, the students of the Upper Division attend the Marble and Stone Carving, Metal Work, or Pottery Classes. These Craft Classes are of great benefit to the students, enabling them to judge better their real aptitude, and to choose, in consequence, the branch of industrial art in which later on they will be able to apply to the best advantage the artistic and practical knowledge which they obtain at the College. The remaining three evenings the students attend the Evening Class for Drawing from the Life. In view of the importance of drawing from the life for sculptors, this Class is very necessary and contributes largely to the progress of the Modelling students.

23. Out of five students who were candidates for the School Diploma, four were successful.

LITERARY COURSE.

LECTURER.—B. A. SPENCER, M.A.

24. While each Professor deals with the practical problems of his School, a Literary Course serves to link the four Schools together. The students' outlook and sources of inspiration are enlarged, and an opportunity is given of remedying defects in general education.

25. The periods covered by the lectures during the session were the Roman, Early Christian, and Mediæval up to the 13th century. All the lectures were illustrated by lantern slides. Each lecture was followed by classes, attended, as were the lectures, by all the students of the College. In view of the limited range of reading of most of the students, these classes are most necessary; students are encouraged to ask questions and thus amplify their notes. The essays written in connection with these lectures are not only indispensable exercises in English composition; they help also to fix the lectures in the minds of the students by compelling the expending of some thought upon them.

26. The classes in French and Italian are greatly appreciated for a number of reasons, but chiefly because all students hope some day to visit those two great places of pilgrimage for Art, Italy and France; and there are many valuable works in these languages in the Museum Art Library which would otherwise be closed to them. Although students are only required to take one language, ten students asked to be allowed to take a second; seven were allowed to do so, the Lecturer being satisfied that they had already made sufficient progress in the one language not to confuse it with the other.

27. The monthly Figure Compositions which are executed by all the students of the College form a great feature of the

curriculum. The exhibition and criticism of them by the Professor of Painting is a great stimulus, and there is keen rivalry among students to have their work placed in the most honourable position. There has been steady improvement in Figure Composition throughout the College during the last four or five years, and it is mainly due to these monthly exercises.

EVENING CLASSES.

INSTRUCTOR.—G. HAYWOOD.

28. These Classes are devoted to instruction in anatomy and drawing from the life. The figure as an element in design is common to all the Schools of the College; moreover, figure drawing is the subject best calculated to train the eye in proportion and character of form, and the hand in accuracy of draughtsmanship. Thus the Evening Classes are of great benefit to the day work, which is richer and sounder in character for them. They are also valuable in that they enable the monthly Figure Compositions to be participated in by all the students of the College.

TRAINING OF TEACHERS.

LECTURER.—A. SPENCER (PRINCIPAL).

29. The course for intending teachers during the past session was the History of Drawing as a means of Education. Papers read at the recent Art Congress, particularly those dealing with Drawing in Elementary and Secondary Schools, were analysed and discussed.

School management was dealt with under the following heads:—

- (i) The Head Master of a School of Art: his duties to his committee, his staff, and his students.
- (ii) Schools of Art and their influence—
 - (a) on the locality generally;
 - (b) on manufactures and industries.
- (iii) The analysis of the system of teaching pursued in the Schools of Architecture and Design, particularly in the Lower Division.

30. The number of students who attended the lectures on methods of teaching was 155 (117 men and 38 women). Ninety-two of these were intending teachers; the remainder were intending specialists, who proposed to give instruction in their special subject. Twenty students assisted during the year in teaching in the Anatomical Room, Antique, Life, Lettering and

Illumination, Pottery, and Embroidery Classes, while five students acted as custodians of material under the Craft Instructors. Some of the senior students obtained employment as teachers under the London County Council, performing their duties after the College Evening Classes. By this means they gained useful experience as teachers.

31. Thirteen students were candidates for the Full Diploma, and ten were successful.

Robert L. Morant

3rd January 1910.

TRAINING OF TEACHERS

PROGRAMME.—A. BRUNNEN (Chairman).

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